

# NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION



## Information Letter



FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

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### Make the Last Half the Best

The Quality Canned Foods Campaign has passed the half-way mark. In many markets results surpassing those of previous campaigns have already been secured. In some other cities, the local committees have deferred their most active efforts until the latter part of the campaign. Time remains in which to accomplish big results, and canners are urged to cooperate with every local committee to make the last part of the campaign the most effective.

The ordering of an additional supply of posters has enabled the National Committee to supply materials to markets where the initial shipments proved inadequate. The second issue of the Cue has been distributed all over the country, and a special bulletin has been sent to the chairman in all cities where advertising is carried, urging the chairmen to make a special effort to secure tie-up advertising.

### House Passes "Slack-fill" Bill

The "slack-fill" bill (H. R. 487) introduced by Representative Haugen was passed by the House on March 14, with an amendment that the penalty provisions be not enforced for violations occurring within twelve months after the passage of the bill, instead of six months as provided in the bill as reported to the House. The Information Letter for February 11 gave an analysis of the bill which now goes to the Senate.

### Dark Color in Canned Corn

During the last year the Laboratory has received a number of samples of canned corn showing an off-color ranging from slightly dark to a bluish black. This color was uniformly distributed throughout the mass of the corn, differing in this respect from the better known iron sulfide "corn black" which forms in the air space and is usually attached to the can or distributed in patches through the corn. In every case the chemical examination of the corn showed the presence of minute quantities of copper. This type of discoloration in canned corn was studied by the Laboratory in 1914 and it was found that when copper was present in corn in excess of 1/10,000ths of 1 per cent (1 part per million) the color was perceptibly darker. As a result of the investigation the following conclusions and recommendations were made:

"When corn canning machinery is idle for several days, the first corn through the line may be of normal color in the cooker and in the can before sealing. After processing, however, it is frequently dark in color, resembling, in appearance, the corn of the trial run at the beginning of the season. This color is caused largely by the presence of a minute trace of copper.

"It is suggested that all copper and brass to which corn or brine is exposed be carefully tinned; also that whenever a line is started after being idle for more than one day, the first corn run should be processed and cooled in small batches and cut for inspection at frequent intervals.

"Some canners have found bran a satisfactory substitute for corn for cleaning the cooker, mixer and filler. Whenever a line is started, either at the beginning of the season, or after a period of idleness during the season, the cooker is filled with a heavily salted mush of bran and water. The mass is thoroughly cooked, during stirring, and run through the filler. The bran is then washed away with a hose and the line is ready for use."

In order to avoid this type of discoloration it is advisable to use other metals than copper and copper-bearing alloys for surfaces that come in contact with the corn and brine, as far as practicable. This cannot be avoided with the cylinders and plungers on filling machines, but the copper taken up from these particular surfaces will not be sufficient to discolor the corn while the plant is in operation or after a shutdown of a single day. The bowl of the filling machine and all cookers and mixers when made of copper or copper-bearing alloys should be heavily tinned. Copper and brass pipes should not be used.

Particular attention is called to the fact that some canners have experienced considerable discoloration from the use of sanitary dairy pipes for conveying their corn. These pipes were supposed to be made of nickel, but as a matter of fact, they were composed of copper-bearing alloy coated with nickel. The nickel coating wore off after a short period of use leaving the brass exposed to the corn and this led to extensive discoloration.

#### Publications of Interest to Canners

A spraying calendar has been issued by the Agricultural Experiment Station of Michigan State College at East Lansing as Special Bulletin No. 174. The bulletin discusses the various spraying materials, furnishes formulas for making them, and gives specific directions for their application.

The Department of Agriculture has issued as Department Bulletin No. 1489 a 64-page pamphlet on "Corn Breeding." The bulletin discusses both the principles and practice of corn breeding and furnishes a list of 78 references to other literature on the subject. Copies of the publication may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents of the Government Printing Office at Washington for 25 cents.

The New York State Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva has issued a 46-page bulletin on "Studies of the Nature and Control of Blight, Leaf and Pod Spot, and Footrot of Peas Caused by Species of *Ascochyta*." The bulletin has a number of excellent illustrations both in half-tone and color; also a list of references to other literature on the subject.

"Pruning the Red Raspberry" is the title of special bulletin No. 162 issued by the Horticultural Section of the Agricultural Experiment Station at East Lansing, Michigan. The bulletin describes the results of different methods of pruning treatment on quantity and quality of output.

#### Hearing on Corn Borer Appropriation Bill

The hearing on the bill (H. R. 10377) which would make an appropriation of \$10,000,000 for continuation of the corn borer clean-up campaign is now scheduled for Monday, March 26, having been postponed two weeks owing to the press of other business before the House committee that is considering the bill.

#### Spinach Acreage in California

The 1928 acreage of spinach for canning, according to a preliminary estimate issued by the California Cooperative Crop

Reporting Service, is 11,520 acres as compared with 10,300 in 1927. The Crop Reporting Service states that because of climatic conditions the production this season may not exceed that of last year despite the increase in acreage.

#### **Freight Rates on Condensed Milk**

The Interstate Commerce Commission in a decision involving the rate on condensed milk in bulk in barrels in less-than-carloads from Chicago to Winston-Salem has found that existing rates are unreasonable and has prescribed that new rates be established which will not exceed the rates now in effect on condensed milk in cans, boxed, in less-than-carloads. The rates prescribed on condensed milk in bulk are to be effective May 1, 1928.

A complaint (Docket 20731) has been filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission asking the establishment of reasonable rates on condensed or evaporated milk from Nampa, Idaho, to destination points in Montana.

#### **Car Loadings**

Loadings of revenue freight for the week ended March 3, totaled 959,537 cars, an increase of 89,947 cars over the preceding week, which included the Washington's birthday holiday, but a decrease of 30,326 cars below the same week in 1927 and a decrease of 5,472 cars compared with the corresponding week two years ago.

#### **Favorable Report on Bill to Reduce Postal Rates**

The House Committee on Post Office and Post Roads has favorably reported the bill (H. R. 12030) which would restore the one-cent postal card rate, reduce second-class rates, and revise the third and fourth class rates downward.

#### **Plant Quarantine Act Amendment Approved by House**

The House on March 14 passed the bill (H. R. 484) amending the plant quarantine act so as to give employees of the Department of Agriculture power to stop and without warrant inspect, search and examine persons or vehicles and to seize, destroy or otherwise dispose of nursery stock, plants, etc., the movement of which in interstate or foreign commerce is prohibited by the quarantine act. The amendment, which was introduced at the request of the Department of Agriculture, is urgently needed, it was stated, to prevent spread of the European corn

borer. Last year, according to statements made in the House, more than 500 motorists from the corn borer area alone refused to submit to inspection.

#### German Experiments with Aluminum Cans

In a report on the experiments of German manufacturers within aluminum for can-making purposes the American commercial attache at Berlin states that, taken as a whole, the chances of aluminum cans replacing tin cans are poor, and the experiments are not expected to be productive of striking results.

#### Canned Milk Inspection Tax Compromise in Peru

A canned milk inspection tax compromise has been tentatively reached by conference between dealers and the Lima public health authorities, by which the tax is to be reduced to two cents per medium sized can (packed 48 cans to the case), which amounts to a uniform tax of 98 centavos per case on all American imports (39.2 cents U. S. currency). The Foodstuffs Division of the U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce states that the Board of Health Authorities have withdrawn the implication of necessity for close inspection as affecting the well known American brands and frankly publish the fact that the tax is levied in order to provide revenues for the task of inspecting the milk locally produced and offered for local consumption. The importers are authorized to pass the tax on the consumers by an increase in selling price.

#### Drop in Italian Cherry Exports to United States

Cherries in brine have steadily lost their place since 1925 as a leading Italian export to the United States, according to a report from the American consul general at Genoa issued by the Department of Commerce. This is ascribed to two things, first, the increase in the value of the lira very nearly eliminated the competitive margin against American grown cherries, and secondly, the American tariff on this product has been increased. It is feared by those interested in the trade that further reductions will be noted during the coming year.

#### Permission to Mix Olive Oil with Dried Pimientos in Spain

The practice has been followed in Spain of adding a certain proportion of olive oil to dried and ground pimientos, this mixture corresponding to the taste of many consumers in Spain as well as abroad, according to the American commercial attache

at Madrid. The practice, which heretofore has not been legally permitted but nevertheless has been tolerated, is now made permissible according to an order published in the Gaceta de Madrid. Among other provisions the order states:

"Under the name of dried, ground pimienton, ground pimienton, or simply 'pimienton' shall be considered the product resulting exclusively from the fruit dried and pulverized.

"Under the name of pimienton with oil (pimienton aceitado) shall be understood the mixture resulting from pimienton above specified to which shall be permitted the addition of pure olive oil in quantity not to exceed ten per cent of the dried pimienton.

"A like mixture of pure olive oil with pimienton shall be permitted for the product when designed for exportation to foreign countries if the legislation of the importing countries so permits."

#### Australian Preserved Fruit Exports

Exports from Australia of fruits preserved in liquid during 1927, according to official Australian statistics received by the Foodstuffs Division of the U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, were as follows:

	Pounds	Value
Apricots .....	1,104,275	\$110,754
Peaches .....	4,393,222	451,345
Pears .....	289,949	33,043
Pineapples .....	8,974	1,308
Other fruits .....	327,657	44,785

#### Canned Grapefruit Production in Porto Rico

Grapefruit canneries in Porto Rico are reducing production because of the existing demand for fresh grapefruit, according to advice to the Department of Commerce from the American trade commissioner at San Juan.

#### House Approves Foreign Agricultural Service Bill

The bill (H. R. 11074) which would establish a foreign agricultural service in the Department of Agriculture on a comparable footing with the Foreign Service of the Department of Commerce was passed by the House on March 14. Under the provisions of this bill the present representatives of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the Department of Agriculture now stationed abroad would be officers of the foreign agricultural service, and the Secretary of Agriculture would be authorized to appoint other officers in the service from time to time in accordance with civil service procedure. All such officers would constitute the foreign agricultural service and would be known



as agricultural attaches or by other such titles as may be deemed appropriate. Officers designated to this service would be regularly and officially attached to the diplomatic mission of the United States, or to the consulate of the United States, in the countries in which stationed.

#### Employment Conditions in February

Employment in February stood at a higher level than it had since November while pay-rolls were greater than at any time since October, according to a report issued by the Employment Service of the U. S. Department of Labor. Employment in manufacturing industries increased  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent in February as compared with January and pay-roll totals increased 4.9 per cent. Both employment and pay-roll totals were about 6 per cent higher in February than in the corresponding month of 1927.

#### Wholesale Prices in February

Practically no change in the general level of wholesale prices from January to February is shown by information collected by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The bureau's weighted index number, computed on prices in the year 1926 as the base and including 550 commodities or price series, stands at 96.4 for February compared with 96.3 for January, an increase of one-tenth of 1 per cent. Compared with February, 1927, with an index number of 95.9, an increase of one-half of 1 per cent is shown.

#### Everyman's Diet

Under the title "Canned Foods—Everyman's Diet" the Industrial Retail Stores for March publishes an interesting and informative article by George A. Parkes, dealing with the part that scientific research has played in improving the products of the canning industry. Industrial Retail Stores is a trade magazine that circulates largely among the executives of stores owned by large mining and industrial concerns.

#### Canners League Adopts Tomato Definitions and Standards

The definitions and standards for canned tomatoes and canned tomato products, which were presented by the Association's Committee on Definitions and Standards at the Chicago convention, were adopted without modification by the Canners League of California at its recent annual meeting in Del Monte. These definitions and standards were published in the Information Letter for February 11.

### **More African Pineapple Imported by Canada**

Imports of British South African canned pineapple into Canada have gained while those from Singapore have declined during the last two years, according to a report from the American vice-consul at Quebec issued by the Foodstuffs Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. Imports from the United States have showed little change in the comparative periods. Hawaiian pineapple ranks highest in quality, and the African product is reported to be superior to that coming from the Straits Settlements.

### **Trade Commission Issues Order on Advertising**

Unless a beverage contains a natural juice or fruit in substantial quantity it shall not be advertised by the name of that fruit, the Federal Trade Commission has ruled in a recent order.

The company to which the order is directed is ordered to stop its use of the words "good grape," "fruit of the vine," or "grape" to designate a product offered for sale unless the product is composed in substantial part of the natural juice or fruit of the grape, and unless the words "good grape," "fruit of the vine," or "grape" are accompanied by qualifying words clearly indicating that the product is made in part of materials other than the natural grape.

### **United States Leads in Concentrated Milk Production**

American production of concentrated milk is about 60 per cent of the world's output, according to a trade bulletin issued by the Foodstuffs Division of the U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. The concentrated products include condensed and evaporated milk, powdered milk, sterilized milk and cream and malted milk and infants food. The world's production in 1925 was about 3½ billion pounds. Next to the United States, the Netherlands is the largest producer, making about 10 per cent of the total.